PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: Jeff Lustgarten, 323/466-3445 Cheryl Collier, 213/236-1942



SCAG JOINS LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL LEADERS IN NATIONAL FREIGHT GATEWAY COLLABORATION

LOS ANGELES – Officials from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) joined a large contingent of local, regional, state and federal agencies today at the Caltrans office in downtown Los Angeles and signed a historic agreement establishing the Southern California National Freight Gateway Collaboration. The collaboration is intended to address the daunting environmental and infrastructure challenges presented by record growth of domestic and waterborne freight moving by ships, trucks and trains throughout the region. More than 40% of the nation's imported goods enter the U.S. at the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles.

"This historic agreement illustrates what can happen when numerous agencies and individuals, at all levels of government and the private sector, put differences aside and work for the common good to address a very important problem, in this case goods movement and its effect on air quality in Southern California," said San Bernardino County Supervisor and SCAG President Gary Ovitt. "Hopefully this goods movement cooperative agreement is just the first in a long list of problem solving efforts by officials at all levels of government and the transportation industry. It will take no less in our future efforts to enhance air quality in our region."

The group hopes to better facilitate cooperation, coordination, and collaboration on critical goods movement issues in the Southern California National Freight Gateway area, which encompasses five Southern California counties and extends from the Ports of Long Beach/Los Angeles to the border with Nevada and Arizona. These critical issues include, but are not limited to, existing and projected landside transportation system congestion (i.e., outside the Ports) and its potential impact on cargo throughout the Ports, and environmental and community impacts caused by goods movement.

"The explosive growth of trade projected over the next 20 years requires that decision makers at all levels of government join together to accelerate the pace of progress. The signing of this important agreement is a significant step forward in our collective efforts to address our most urgent needs and improve the overall performance of California's goods movement system," said California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency Secretary Dale Bonner. "The future health and welfare of Southern California depends on clearing the air and growing the economy. Improving the transport of freight

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through Southern California will lead to significant progress in meeting both of these goals," Nelson added.

The collaboration's main objective is to improve sustainable and efficient freight transportation operations in Southern California, while protecting and enhancing health and safety, air quality, and the well-being of adjacent communities. Both the rail lines and freeways are already heavily congested, and with the expected 25% increase of regional population by 2030, the congestion problem will only get worse. More than 16 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of containerized cargo are moved annually through the Ports, a volume that is expected to nearly triple to more than 42.5 million TEUs by 2030. SCAG anticipates that daily truck traffic at the Ports will increase from 54,600 trips in 2005 to 142,000 in 2030 and *daily* freight and passenger train traffic will increase from 176 trains in 2000 to 265 to 390 in 2025 and 441 in 2030.

While the benefits of these annual imports are clear – presently they have a value of more than \$200 billion, support 2.8 million jobs, and generate \$28 billion in state and local tax revenues – the costs are severe as well. For example, sources involved in goods movement are major contributors to ambient particulate levels in the South Coast Air Basin that are estimated to cause 5,400 premature deaths *annually*. Earlier this summer, SCAG's Regional Council voted to approve a strong resolution urging state and federal officials to take emergency action in addressing the growing air quality crisis associated with the movement of goods.

In addition to SCAG, other signatories of the collaboration agreement included:

CA Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation

CA Environmental Protection Agency Authority

CA Resources Agency Orange County Transportation Authority

CA Air Resources Board Riverside County Transportation Commission

U. S. Department of Transportation San Bernardino Associated Governments

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Ventura County Transportation Commission

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Port of Los Angeles

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Port of Long Beach

U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service Port of Hueneme

South Coast Air Quality Management District

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